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1968/11/09

[November 9, 1968]

Sat 0900 Sat 9 Nov '68

CMC "Fri a.m. (yesterday) LBJ phoned & asked me to get together with Walt & Rusk.

[William] Bundy had written an "Incredibly soft & mushy cable to Bunker on how to get the S.V.Nameese back on the team. "It struck me wrong. It struck Dean wrong (more import!) "Bunker had told us he was standing by to see Thieu. CMC argued Bunker should withdraw his request & let Thieu come to see him...but lost out on that.

Then CMC reads aloud the tough cable that went at 9:45 p.m. last nite. An extraordinarily tough letter to Bunker to give Thieu.

The big point was whether we could take it--& if he is recalcitrant, do we go ahead? in Paris? This cable now says yes we do! Much difference of opinion but CMC argued with Cy Vance (on phone from Paris) that there are plenty of procedural matters to deal with in Paris by us alone & if we start talks, SVNam will have to come along. "We aren't getting anything for the bombing halt if we don't go ahead

We can talk with Hanoi & VC/NLF whether or not S.V.N.am there to argue about mortar attacks on cities

Getting at this new strong Position document
This was a major accomplishment it's a total change from Bundy's approach. "Rostow is now very quiet--(this is significant--he's ceased being the total apologist for SVNam "LBJ is now very hard-nosed about Thieu Dean Rusk is begi[nning] to be--

LBJ now thinks Thieu is a liar & a double[-]crosser--

The "Little Flower" contact is still going on--

Nixon seems unwilling/unable to help. His people are still playing their Black Games.

LBJ "calling Senators who say tell Thieu "Kiss your behind"
"Tell him to go to Hell"

CMC says LBJ reached a decision to stop the bombing. He's convinced he had a good deal & other side is living up to its agreement: viz: DMZ is "dead"; attacks on cities are non-existent

So LBJ has only Thieu to blame & get mad at & is he mad!

CMC hopes Paris shld meet next Wed [11-13-68] whether S.V.N. or not

Strategic Russian talks

CMC can't take it to LBJ. He can't take any more to him until Saigon settled.

CMC--on Israel--

CMC continues "tough"--

CMC on Har. Brown--re F-111's

we are going to bring F-111's home from Asia. now
(They're no damn good)